

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

In the present application, claims 1-56 are currently pending. Claims 1, 23 and 45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by United States Patent No. 5, 404,376 A to Dent ("Dent"). Claims 1-5, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 23-27, 31, 32, 36, 40, 41, 45-49 and 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in light of the combination of Dent and British patent number GB 2311697 A to Sugiura et al. ("Sugiura"). Claims 11-13, 20-22, 33-35, 42-44, 50-52 and 54-56 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank Examiner Persino for the explicit indication that claims 11-13, 20-22, 33-35, 42-44, 50-52 and 54-56 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended claims 11-13, 20-22, 33-35, 42-44, 50-52 and 54-56 to be in independent form and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. All other pending claims have been canceled.

CONCLUSION

The application is considered to be in good and proper form for allowance, and the examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If, in the opinion of the examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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